

**Ambassadorial Retreat on the Comprehensive High-level  
Midterm  
Review on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of  
Action  
for the Decade 2014–2024**

**Opening Session**

***“Fostering Synergies between the VPoA and 2030 Agenda for  
Sustainable Development”***

**Chair’s opening Statement**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for giving me the floor. At the outset I wish to thank Under Secretary-General and High Representative Ms. 'Utoikamanu for organizing this event. I wish to thank Her Excellency, Ms Inga Rhonda King, the president of ECOSOC for joining these discussions that are focused on LLDCs.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The theme for this session “*Fostering Synergies between the VPoA and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*” is indeed relevant especially now as we undertake the midterm review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action.

Almost five years into the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and four years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, key indicators clearly show that progress achieved so far in the LLDCs is not enough for our countries to achieve the SDGs.

Let me highlight some views on what needs to be done to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action:

- Any country's development is its primary responsibility. It is therefore important for the LLDCs to enhance their efforts to mobilise domestic resources. The need to support the LLDCs' efforts by providing technical assistance and capacity building however remains important.
- Mobilization of additional resources to complement the LLDCs' domestic efforts is vital. Official Development Assistance remains an important form of financing to LLDCs and should be enhanced.
- There is need to scale up funding and financing needed to close the LLDCs transport infrastructure gap.
- There is need to support the efforts of the LLDCs to develop renewable energy sources through providing technical assistance and capacity building.
- It is important to support the LLDCs to develop their private sector including creation of enabling environment for SMMEs to participate in international trade.
- There is need to enhance the capacity of the LLDCs to produce modern and higher value-added products, focus on high-productivity sectors and connect with regional and global value chains.
- The multilateral trading system plays an important role in addressing the inequality among countries and it is therefore necessary to make concerted efforts to address challenges facing the WTO.

- It is important to recognize the impact of climate change in the LLDCs and make concerted efforts to address them.
- In light of the current repositioning, the UN development system should accord high priority to the economic sectors and productive capacity building in LLDCs. The role of all the other partners including the regional organisations and other major stakeholders is important and should be emphasized.
- It is crucial that the UN System better positions itself to support the most vulnerable countries, such as the LLDCs. The strengthening of UN-OHRLLS is key in this endeavour.

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

The time is now for the global community to live to the commitment of “leaving no one behind”. The outcome document of the Midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action should be ambitious, comprehensive, forward-looking and result oriented to enable achievement of the desired socio-economic transformation of LLDCs in the remaining five years.

I thank you for your kind attention.